CHAPTER VII

I WAS on the point of returning to the West when I received a message from Horace Greeley, the famous editor of the New York *Tribune*> asking me to take charge of the news-bureau of that journal in Washington as its chief corre-spondent. Although the terms offered by Mr. Greeley were tempting, I was disinclined to accept because I doubted whether the work would be congenial to me, and because it would keep me in the East. But Mr. Greeley, as well as some of my friends in Congress, persuaded me that, as I had studied the condition of things in the South and could give reliable information concerning it, nay presence in Washington might be useful while the Southern question was under debate. This determined me to assent, with the understanding, however, that I should not consider myself bound beyond the pending ses-sion of Congress.

Thus I entered the journalistic fraternity * My most agreeable experience consisted in my association with other members of the craft. I found among the correspondents of the press a number of gentlemen of uncommon ability and high principle—genuine gentlemen who loved the truth for its own sake, who heartily detested sham and false pretense, and whose sense of honor was the finest. This was the rule, to which, as to all rules, there were, of course, some exceptions. But they were rare. My more or less intimate contact with public

men, high and low, was not so uniformly gratifying. I enjoyed, indeed, the privilege of meeting statesmen of high pur-